The Lions' Pride

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Spring Art Gala and Student Competition

By Michayne Stoney
Contributing Writer

On Apr. 7, the School of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Language Studies and the Arts, hosted the first annual Spring Gala. This took place from 1 to 5 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building gallery and courtyard. The student art show, which happens each Fall and Spring semester, also took place. Here, students, faculty, staff, and alumni enjoyed an afternoon of interactive art games, create-your-own art stations, and a student art show and competition.

Jennifer Orendorf, administrator of events and special programs in the department of arts and sciences, said that: "The School of Arts and Sciences had a bigger vision for this year's show. We had hoped to make the arts more accessible to all students – not just those taking our classes – and allow people to view our Fine Art Building and the work we all do here. We had hoped to have a creative day that allowed stress relief, fun and games and above all expression. In the future, we have any loftier goals of bringing in arts and crafts from the community."

Martina McKoy, a first year psychology major said: "I had class up until 4 pm, and as soon as they ended, I had to come see all the art they were showcasing. I appreciate seeing all the creativity Saint Leo students have. My favorite part was the performance by the girl group. They definitely did a really good job. I did not even know a group like that existed here on campus, so I was pleasantly surprised."

Krastanka McBride, who is currently pursuing an Associate of Arts Degree, thoroughly enjoyed decorating her board, which symbolized what art meant to her.

"I feel as if art is anything you can dream, and believe, and anything you are inspired to do. My board is a representation of just that – all my dreams, passions, and aspiration. I love that this Spring Gala allowed students like myself to express themselves using art," said McBride.

Many students who were not participating in the art competition were seen decorating similar boards, and taking pictures with their various art pieces. Others; however, proudly displayed their work for the competition. The official judge for the competition was Maria Martinez-Drovie, who is a Graduate Enrollment Counselor here at Saint Leo University. Drovie also has a strong background in art which made her well suited for judging. The categories for purposes of judging included: ceramics/sculpture, painting/silk painting, photography, and drawing. There was also an award for overall best in the show.

The winners for each category are listed below:

Ceramics/Sculpture:
First: Marilyn Ceja
Second: Kim Estrada
Third: Kim Estrada

Drawing:
First: Lauren Kilton (black and white charcoal)
Second: Brittany Cristiano (ink)
Third: Daniella Zacarias (graphite)

Painting:
First: Sarah Ellis (acrylic)
Second: Erin Scotti (acrylic)
Third: Orlando Rolim (silk painting)

Photo By Michayne Stoney
One of the art stations available at the Gala was painting a wooden board with whatever came to one's mind.

Photography:
First: Kathryn Rhoden (digital),
Second: Gaelle Batroni (gelatin silver print)
Third: Alexis Carrera (Digital)

The best in show was Gaelle Batroni, who also won second place in the photography category.

An informal visitor's poll was also done, and this gave, students, faculty, staff, and alumni an opportunity to vote for their favorite and be a part of the judging process. The winners of the different category from this informal poll are below:

Painting – a tie between Marie Umholtz (acrylic) and Marissa Hasara (Batik)

Photography – Brihkel Jaegar

Sculpture – James Sweeney (clay)

Drawing – Jahiedy Vinas (black and white charcoal)

The best in show was Orlando Rolim (Batik). Rolim was most definitely a favorite among the participants in the poll as he won this category by an overwhelming majority.

When asked about the overall success of the event, Orendorf said: "I think that the day was a success. Many participants that I spoke with told me they wished we do it more often or that our seniors were sorry that they wouldn't have another opportunity because it was their final term."

The art gala closed with a wonderful musical performance by girl group Soprano Alto Second Soprano (SASS) of Saint Leo University. Becky Trabing, a sophomore and biology major, Jamie Bider,a junior majoring in international hospitality and tourism management, Gabi Court a junior, majoring in social work, Katrina Weicht, a senior computer science major, Amanda Topper, a sophomore communications major, and Jasmine Collins, a senior majoring in psychology blew everyone away with their amazing voices and spectacular talent. It was undoubtedly a wonderful end to the Spring Gala.

More pictures from the event may be seen on Instagram by searching 2016springartgala!

Photo By Michayne Stoney
The all-girl singing group, SASS, performed at the Spring Art Gala and finished off the afternoon with a spectacular musical performance.

Photo By Michayne Stoney
Another art station at the Spring Art Gala was silk painting. Here people were invited to paint on a stretched piece of silk and contribute to the piece.

Editorial

The Unanswerable Dispute

By Rafal Matuszczak
Contributing Writer

On July 17, 1984, Congress passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Act. Since then, the United States remains one of just a few developed countries in which the legal drinking age is over 18. However, does maintaining the higher drinking age encourage enough positive consequences to keep it unchanged, or should it be lowered?

The world's average legal drinking age is 15.9, and it varies by country. While some countries do not have any laws that state at what age people are allowed to drink alcoholic beverages, in other parts of the world, alcohol consumption is banned completely.

The vast majority of the developed countries set their legal drinking age to 18, and some countries, such as Germany, Denmark, and Belgium, allow consumption of light alcoholic beverages at the age of 16.

In fact, in the past, in most of the states in the U.S, the legal drinking age was 18, as well. The reason for that was that the age of 18 was the national age of adulthood, and that age has not been changed since then. Therefore, the 18 year-old teenagers were granted all of the privileges of adult citizens of the United States, but they still could not buy alcohol.

Since people at the age of 18 were considered responsible enough to be full-fledged Americans, which included being able to vote or serve the country in the military, by the late 1970s, many states decided to lower the legal drinking age from 21 to 18.

The situation changed when several studies showed that the alcohol-related car crashes among people younger than 21 increased. The states that previously lowered their legal drinking age began to reverse their laws and set the age to 21 again. The changes were also a result of the campaign of a national organization Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which became very popular in the country after it was founded in 1980.

In fact, one of the studies titled "The effects of minimum legal drinking age 21 laws on alcohol-related driving in the United States" found that increasing the drinking age to the previous level had a very positive result on the number of alcohol-related car crashes.

While in 1982 the percentage of fatally injured drivers at the age between 16 and 21 who had a positive blood alcohol content was equal to 61 percent, in 1995 when the legal drinking age was 18 again, the percentage dropped to 31 percent.

The study indicated that there is a definite relationship between the minimum legal drinking age and the number of highway crashes. Also, it states that there is no evidence that alcohol education could replace the effect of the legal drinking age of 21, and therefore, it should not be lowered.

However, it has also been proven that traffic accidents are very common among newly legal drinkers, and the minimum legal drinking age does not make any difference.

Therefore, is the low drinking age an actual issue or is the problem that drunk driving is a result of trying the "forbidden fruit", which in this case is the alcohol that the teenagers could not drink legally before?

No matter what the answer is, the statistics clearly show that a higher drinking age reduces traffic accidents. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated that from 1975 to 2008 the number of fatal traffic accidents for 18 to 20-year-old drivers decreased by 13 percent and saved approximately 27,052 lives.

On the other hand, the minimum legal drinking age is not related to driving only. Even though it helps to decrease the number of accidents on highways, it does not mean that making the alcohol legal only for those people who are 21 years old resolved all issues related to drinking and did not have any negative consequences.

Raising the legal drinking age to 21 did not change the fact that teenagers who are younger consume alcoholic beverages. The underage drinking is a problem, and the truth is that raising the minimum legal drinking might have contributed to the issue.

Because underage drinking is illegal, the teenagers who decide to break the law and consume alcohol have to hide, and they might drink it in places which are more dangerous that the regular settings designated for the consumption. The teenagers consume the alcohol away from adults, and because many times they are not educated enough to do it safely, such happening might have very serious consequences.

According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, underage drinking accounts for 17.5 percent of consumer spending for alcohol in the United States. Also, one of the studies presented that in 2006, 72.2 percent of twelfth graders admitted that they have consumed alcohol at some point in their lives.

The statistics clearly present that the minimum legal drinking age does not indicate when the teenagers actually start drinking, for many of them decide to consume alcohol before they turn 21 even though it is illegal.

They also present that, for underage drinkers, it is relatively easy to get the alcohol and break the law. The concern that might arise is that if breaking the law through underage drinking is so easy and many times without consequences, can it encourage the teenagers to break the law in other ways?

Even though it is hard to answer this question, it is a fact that lowering the age from 21 to 18 would reduce the underage drinking rates.

For the rest of the article head online to www.prideonlinedotnet.wordpress.com

Check us out online at www.prideonlinedotnet.wordpress.com

Annual Spring Sing

Photo From Wikimediacommons

On Mar. 29th, SLU held a veritable musical festival in the SCC Boardrooms. Students, staff, and faculty were able to enjoy musical performances the entire night.

Employing the Future

Photo From Wikimediacommons

Mar. 28 saw the University's semesterly Career Fair. At the Career Fair, students were given the opportunity to speak with several company representatives present.

The Impact of Water

Photo From Wikimediacommons

The University's Department of Mathematics and Science put on a Fun Science Cafe in which the impact of water on our society was discussed. For more information, look online.

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Campus News

A Murder is Announced

By Chloe-Ana Braidy
Contributing Writer

On Apr. 1-3 and Apr. 8-10, the Saint Leo Theatre Department put on a production of Agatha Christie's "A Murder is Announced" for the Spring play as announced in Fall 2015. The production was performed in the Black Box Theatre of the newly renovated Benedictine Hall, which is located on the far west side of the University Campus (near admissions). This is a big advancement from the Blithe Spirit production in Fall 2015, which was performed at the pavilion between the Campus Music and Campus Safety buildings. Patrons greatly appreciated the venue as there were little to no disturbances to the play.

"A Murder is Announced," written by world renowned author Agatha Christie, is her fiftieth published story and is considered her most cleverly written mystery. Published in 1950, this story unfolds with a cryptic notice in the local gazette of a murder happening at a specific place and time, the villagers, particularly Letitia Blacklock (Elizabeth Panek, a senior biology major), makes nothing of this notice and proceeds to go on with normal daily activities by having guests over. The other villagers; however, take this notice more seriously, as it is quite intriguing. As the day goes on and the projected time for the murder draws near, they all get paranoid and, as projected, the murder happens. This story features Miss Marple and unfolds quite cleverly.

The students who brought this story to life, did a wonderful job at reenacting the parts of the villagers and their interesting personalities. They went deep into character and did so with conviction. Dora "Bunny" Bunner, who was portrayed by Emily Kochanski, a sophomore dramaturgy major, did a commendable job at playing her role as she really grabbed the attention of the audience and secured their conviction with her spot-on accent and personality.

The play was excellently designed and put together by the crew and director Alicia Corts, who is an assistant professor of dramaturgy (theatre) here at the University. It is commendable that with limited space and resources, the cast and crew brought such a renowned story to life very well.

Corts commented on the success of the production: "The audience is just as important as the crew and cast, we need that audience to keep us sighted and really into it, we feed off of that in a big way".

The appreciation from audiences for productions put on by Saint Leo Theatre Department has grown significantly over the semester. Compared to the department's production of "Blithe Spirit" back in Fall 2015, the play was put on for two consecutive weekends in Apr., which is a big step for the department in terms of exposure.

Corts also enthused about the progression of theatre at Saint Leo: "Theatre is coming up in Saint Leo in a big way. We can't wait to see who else joins our group. It's really worthwhile, it's not just the fun of doing a show, it's the friendship, the experience in life [...] It's incredible."

She explained the importance of having a creative space within the college community and the impact it has on students.

"To play takes much work, but when we experience that work is play, it is no longer work but play; a play is play," enthused Corts.

Corts hopes that with the growth of the theatre at Saint Leo, the department will be able to have productions put on and written by students in the near future. In Fall 2016, the department is set to put on an original play about the Benedictine Sisters written by Saint Leo students, who the renovated Benedictine Hall and the former chapel of the Benedictine Sisters is named after.

Photo By Chloe-Ana Braidy

According to Aristotle, the plot is the most important feature of a dramatic performance.

National

To File or Not to File

By Erin Gaylord and Samantha Corcoran
Online Editor
Contributing Writer

Picture From Twitter @Forbes

Many people are unaware that not paying their taxes can seriously affect the flow of traffic as tax money goes towards repairing roads and maintaining traffic lights and signs.

Most people can't stand filing their taxes, but many people don't often think about the cost for the roads they drive on, the cost for the national parks that they enjoy, or the cost for the police officers and firemen that protect them. Although taxes are typically considered an inconvenience, it must be done in order to keep the things citizens need on a daily basis.

There are different types of taxes, for both individuals and businesses. There are income taxes, property taxes, and sales taxes. Income taxes are mainly to benefit the federal government while both income and sales taxes benefit state governments. On the other hand, county and city governments utilize property taxes to increase revenue. Governments levy these different types of taxes on individuals and businesses to cover the costs of their expenses. If the people are not taxed, there's no money for the government to take care of things that benefit society as a whole for example, roads, schools, and national defense/state or local police protection, etc., according to the U.S Department of the Treasury.

There are some advantages of filing. Many citizens that are categorized under the low income tax bracket are eligible for a tax refund. Also, for those who take care of children under the age of 13 or care for someone who cannot take care of themselves they can receive a tax credit that may help counteract the cost of their care. For citizens who pay for tuition or enrollment fees for themselves, a spouse, or a dependent, they will receive a tax break or credit which will decrease the amount they would have to pay for taxes or increase the amount they will receive from the government according to the U.S. Tax Center.

At the end of the tax season, after everyone has filed their taxes, the government decides which people will receive money back from the government due to an over payment of taxes while others will have to pay in to the government because they have not paid enough. Tax returns should come within three weeks of the day they were filed.

Not everyone has to file, but most people do. Factors that dictate if one needs to file taxes include: annual income, age, marital status, and if someone has a dependent. Some tell-tale signs that a person must file include: if said person makes more than $10,000 in the previous tax year as a single filer, or more than $20,000 filing jointly (married) they will have to file. Similarly if a citizen is self-employed and earns more than $400, they will have to file. If taxes were not taken out on any form of wages or tips, taxes will be owed on them, and the person will need to file. For more information on who should file taxes, go to irs.com.

Dependent, single students under the age of 65 who are not blind have to file if their income in 2015 was more than $6,300 according to irs.gov. Some scholarships are taxable, so students should look into their financial aid packages before determining if they do or do not need to file.

Taxes can be filed online or printed from the official IRS website, completed, and mailed. There are different softwares made to help with completing taxes, such as TurboTax. There are also companies like H&R Block that file taxes for people, so they do not have to worry about doing it themselves. H&R Block also has a checklist for what information one should have handy to complete their taxes here: http://www.hrblock.com/tax-offices/tax-prep/tax-prep-checklist.html.

Many college students have not filed taxes before and may not have been taught how to file. Some students are either exempt from filing for some reason, or have their parents file their taxes for them, but eventually everyone must learn how to file their own taxes.

"It should be mandatory for colleges to require freshman students to take an annual tax filing class in the fall semester. It should be a requirement because it is necessary to know how to file taxes," said Lauren Broom, freshman, criminal justice major.

People tend to be thrown into filing their own taxes, and may make some mistakes the first time or two. If colleges or high schools had a mandatory class to teach students about things adults must know when they move out on their own, it should make a smoother processes for everyone.

Picture From Twitter @ViceNews

Tax dollars also go towards funding police forces and firefighters among other public service officials without whom many lives would be in danger.

Health

A Day Just as Good as Any Other to be Healthy

By Charles Onyeneke
Contributing Writer

Many will say that being alive is the most precious thing to them, so to protect their lives, they must be healthy. No matter what people do with their lives, there are consequences. Good lifestyles usually mean a person is healthy while bad lifestyles usually means a person is unhealthy.

Health was defined in its broader sense in its 1948 constitution by the World Health Organization as a state of complete physical mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Dr. Gale Alava, assistant professor of health management, defined health as the ability to care of oneself, not being sick, or not being in the hospital.

"Health is a balance between your social, physical, emotional activities, because physically, you can look like you are healthy, maybe your mind is not there, maybe you have a mental disease, maybe you have emotion distress or maybe you have financial problem, all these things makes health not to be balance," said Alava.

Many years ago, mental and physical health were not considered equally important. For example, having depression is not the same as being treated for a bone fracture. Both physical and mental diseases should be treated the same, and should be paid the same way. There should be a balance between physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health in order to live healthy.

Thus "the most important thing in taking care of health is prevention, there are different levels of prevention, the most important one is avoiding getting sick in the first place," said Alava.

It is very important to be healthy, that is why the World Health Organization made Apr.7 a special day for everyone to check up on their health.

According to Teresa Dadez, director of the health and wellness center, "health is important because it gives you a quality of life that you can reach any goal you desire, you can have a brain that will function at the peak of its performance, and that helps when you get enough nutrition and oxygen to your body to keep it functioning well for 90 to 100 years."

"Health is important for many things, healthy people actually feel better about themselves, healthy people have no issues to work with, healthy people are more productive, and health people hopefully have a longer life" said Alava.

Therefore, beyond avoiding diseases, being healthy and fit gives people the energy to live fully as opposed to merely surviving. Being around healthy people is inspiring to others, motivating them to be the best they can be.

"Be conscious of what you do today because when you are older is when you will realize what you do have done to yourself or should not have done when you are young. It is when you get older you will be seeing the effect," said Laura Harvey, a nurse at the Health and Wellness Center.

There are numerous things one can do in order to be healthy.

"You have to eat right, you have to make sure you move your muscle all the time, because if you don't use your muscles, you kind of lose your muscles, they kind of have memory of their own, muscles memory and they will do what you tell them to do," said Dadez."Your heart is included there, if you are using your heart too much like using it over time, to just sit there and work, it will run too fast, that is what is called Tachycardia. That is over 100 all the time, it is beating too fast, you have to learn what is going on to make it correct, that is because the blood volume is too low or your body is not healthy enough to get it keep moving around like it normally is, so it pumps harder which gives you high blood pressure."

There are a lot of reasons for things to happen your health.

"If you are not taking care of yourself or get a disease that is hard to diminish like diabetes," said Dadez.

That is why this year's World Health Day is focused on diabetes.

"On this World Health Day,I want to call your attention to a disease that is affecting the lives and well being of more than 60 million people in the Americas. This disease is diabetes. It affects people of all walks of life, but it takes its greatest toll on people living," said Carissa Etienne, Director of the Pan America Health Organization.

According to Alava, prevention is a major way of being healthy. It offers a better life and can help keep people from having to go to the hospital in some cases.

People should be concerned about their health and well-being to possibly live to be 100 years old, or older.

Dadez suggested not smoking as a way to keep oneself healthy, as many harmful chemicals are inhaled while smoking. "If you start from [a young age], if you take care of what you eat, if you don't smoke, if you don't [partake in] any risky behaviors, if you don't engage in unhealthy practices, probably you are going to be ok," said Alava.

So it is everyone's responsibility to take care of him or herself. Being careless with one's health can negatively affect his or her future.

"If you are aware of what can happen either by learning from your parents or learning from somebody else in your family problems that are genetics like diabetes, with education you monitor what your blood sugar is, at least once a year or if you have cancer that runs in your family, education will help you to be careful of your daily activities," said Dadez.

"Education is the primary prevention of sickness," said Alava. "The secondary prevention is knowing the sign and symptoms of a sickness, in order to start taken care of that quickly, getting treatment sooner to prevent the disease to get worst. And the third prevention is that when the disease happened, things to know that can actually get you normal into productive life and avoiding getting new disease in the future, things like psychotherapy, family therapy, counseling, interpersonal therapy etc."

It is best to be aware of one's own body and how one feels as being healthy involves have solid well-being physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.

Picture From Twitter @WHO

This year's International Health Day was focused on diabetes, a metabolic disease in which the body is unable to produce enough, if any, insulin and causing high glucose levels in the blood stream. More information about diabetes can be found at: www.who.int/diabetes/global-report.

Arts & Entertainment

Fourteen Tracks of Slow Tears

By Annie Hays
Layout Editor
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Zakk Wylde, the lead guitarist for Ozzy Osbourne's solo band and Black Label Society, has released his second solo effort: "Book of Shadows II." This album follows its predecessor from 1996 as a mostly acoustic album. While this album could have, and should have, been fantastic as Wylde has proven his musical prowess over his decades long career, the album is incredibly difficult to listen to from start to finish.

The main issue with "Book of Shadows II" is that every single song features a slow tempo, minor key, and melancholy lyrics for a depressing feel. While the lyrics and heavy use of minor keys would be fine on a different album, the slow pace of each song makes the 14 tracks drag on. The strength of this album is the use of Wylde's guitar solos. In nearly every song, whether the song is acoustic or electric based, he adds an electric guitar solo. By the later tracks on the album these solos serve as a way to keep listeners from dozing off.

Because the songs are so similar, it is difficult to pick one track that stood out as the best of the album. That distinction has to go to the penultimate track, "Sleeping Dogs." This song earns its place as best of the album due to its music video rather than the music itself. "Sleeping Dogs" video features witches performing rituals, but these images are juxtaposed with an innocuous, acoustic-based song. While this is a good song, by the thirteenth track this style has been so overdone that the quality of this particular track is marred.

The album begins with "Autumn Changes." Wylde and the band sing in harmony, and this is a primarily acoustic track with the standard electric guitar solo overlaid onto the song. The song is hurt by the drums and cymbals being turned too loud for this soft track, and they overpower other elements of the track.

"Tears of December" is a rather generic acoustic track, and it almost sounds like a country song with the sad lyrics, slow guitar chords, and Wylde's deep singing.

"Lay Me Down" has a heavy use of synthesizers, and occasionally vocal harmonization between Wylde and the rest of the band. The use of an organ and the lyrics featuring many references to water and repentance, give this track a Gospel feel. This is one of the only guitar solos on the album to feature distortion of the instrument, but this is juxtaposed with clean picking later in the solo as though to symbolize purification.

"Lost Prayer" features finger picking on an electric guitar at the beginning of the track that gives this a unique sound. Unfortunately, after that this track blends into the rest of the slow, sad tracks on the album. This track is also plagued with a heavy use of cymbals that clash with the mellow track.

"Darkest Hour" is one of the best tracks to nap to on this album. The generic lyrics are about standing with someone in a time of need, and there is nothing special about this track musically. "The Levee" is an acoustic track with Wylde singing in a sleepy voice. This is another great nap track as Wylde's voice and the occasional vocal harmonies are very relaxing.

"Eyes of Burden" is a surprising addition to the album as it is a beautiful love song with a great mix of acoustic and electric guitars along with the organ. The solo does not quite fit the song and feels like it was added at the last second after the song was complete, but it is short so it barely affects the quality of this track.

The next track on the album, "Forgotten Memory," would be another naptime track as it very mellow, but it features the out of place crashing cymbals. This is unfortunate as the lyrics are quite poetic, and the solo fits very well with the rest of the song unlike some of the other tracks.

"Yesterday's Tears" is also a mellow track, but it has a heavy use of synthesizers.

"Harbors of Pity" starts with harmonized vocals in time with the start of the song, and it features a slow, marching beat to differentiate it from the other tracks. As the title implies, this is a very sad song, and the slow, mostly harmonized vocals lull listeners to sleep until the guitar solo. "Sorrowed Regrets" has a delicate acoustic guitar pick-up at the beginning. However, the song fades to quiet organ and lyrics in case anyone had not passed out by this point in the album. The guitar solo is the sloppiest on the album and felt like it had been added long after the song was complete.

"Useless Apologies" is a soft, delicate track with beautiful harmonies and a guitar solo that fits well with the rest of the track. On a livelier album, this track would have been a great way to break up heavier songs, but on this album this track can get lost in all the other mellow tracks.

The album ends with the ambient, organ heavy power ballad called "The King." Wylde's deep, soulful voice is great for a power ballad, and the song is a great finish to this album.

This album is tough to score as so many of the tracks such as "Sleeping Dogs," "Eyes of Burden," "Useless Apologies," and "The King" would be great tracks when paired with louder, faster songs. However, the album must be reviewed as a whole, so because it is so difficult to listen to from start to finish due to the sad, slow songs that lull listeners into a nap, this album earns a 3/5. However, the aforementioned gems on this album should be given a listen as they are each solid tracks.

Upcoming Events

April 16 - UFC Fight Night @ Amalie Arena - Tickets from $40.00
April 29 - 98RockFest @ Amalie Arena - Tickets from $29.00
May 21 - Daryl Hall & John Oates @ MidFlorida Credit Union Ampitheatre - Tickets from $13.50
May 26 - R. Kelly Buffett Tour @ Amalie Arena - Tickets from $65.00
June 10 - Journey & The Doobie Brothers with special guest Dave Mason @ Mid Florida Credit Union Ampitheatre - Tickets from $25.00
June 15 - Weezer & Panic! At The Disco @ MidFlorida Credit Union Ampitheatre - Tickets from $18.00

Photo From Twitter @ZakkWyldeBLS

Zakk Wylde is usually known for his metal albums, but he decided to release his second solo acoustic album ten years after his first foray into softer music.

Arts & Entertainment

Stardew Valley: Farming's Never Been So Fun

By Austin Chiavaroli
Staff Writer

Simulation games have drastically grown in popularity in the past couple years, giving individuals a chance to simulate driving, being other creatures, and working on a farm. "Stardew Valley," published by Chucklefish Games, is a recently released indie RPG farming simulator for the PC that allows the player to create his/her own farm and have his/her own unique experience with the local town in the game.

While there isn't much story to this game, it starts with the players dying grandfather giving them a deed showing they have inherited a plot of land to live and farm. Once there, players will see that the plot is a mess and needs a lot of work done on it before it can be farmed. With tools in hand, it is now the players' job to farm their story as they talk to the neighboring locals and start building a better farm.

There are an abundance of things to do in this game, such as going into mines. In the mines, the player's tools get replaced with a sword and pickaxe as he/she mines rocks for special items while fighting off enemies. Another thing the player can do is go around the local town and become more acquainted with the NPC's. Building friendship can help the player get better deals in shops and can even allow the character to get married.

The game mechanics realistically simulate how to build a farm, such as crops dying from too much water if the player waters them on a rainy day. Snow in the winter time can also kill crops as this time should be used more to talk to townsfolk and mine for items. Besides crops, there is also livestock the player must take care of, which are also affected by these conditions.

Players get a house to live in on the plot of land, and they have a wide variety a ways to customize the house for their own liking. Individuals from the town might even want to stay at the player's house and help them with the crops and livestock as well.

The pixel artwork of the game looks gorgeous as there are many warm colors used for the color pallet that really give a sense of calmness to the game. Even the character designs look aesthetically pleasing. Looking like something from the SNES (Super Nintendo Entertainment System), the game has a retro feel to it.

"Stardew Valley's" soundtrack is also pleasing to the ears as most of the music played is soothing. This game's clock is based around in game time with a seasonal game mechanic, so winter, spring, summer and fall change the music.

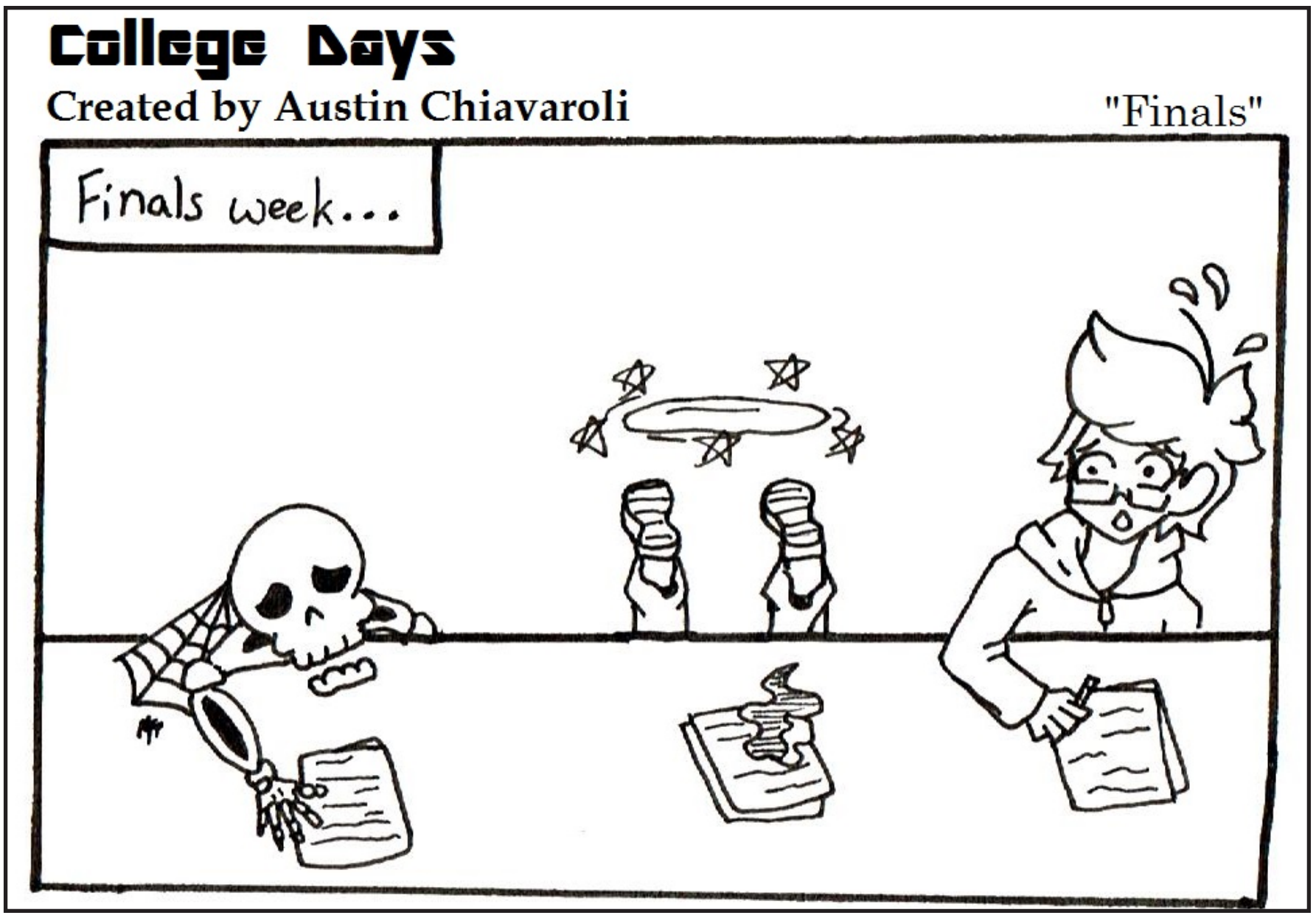
One thing that has shocked the gaming community about this game is that it was all made by one individual, Eric Barone. Creating and composing the music, programming the mechanics, creating the artwork and every design in game was all done by one man in a time span of four years. Even to this day, Barone is adding more to the "Stardew Valley" and fixing any bugs or issues that players may be finding with the game.

Photo From Twitter @ConcernedApe

Crops in "Stardew Valley" are used to gain currency and to make player's farms look beautiful and pleasing to the eye.

There are only a couple of issues that this game has, given all of its content. Some of the dialogue for the characters can be a little stiff and cliche, especially for the male characters in the town. Another issue is the energy meter.The energy meter shows the player how much energy they have left before they need to go to bed and start the next day.This hurts the game a bit for those who want to continue playing past certain hours of the game and can be annoying when the player wants to do more farming quickly.

"Stardew Valley" has a lot of great things that overweigh the bad, as most of the options to explore in the game are open right when the player gets to the plot of land. This game does a great job of keeping the player entertained and playing for hours with still more to do. It looks and feels like the other, much older, farming simulator game series, "Harvest Moon." If you are a fan of the "Harvest Moon" games or just want to try something new, relaxing, and addicting to play, then this game is for you. "Stardew Valley" gets a 4.7/5.



Sports

Lightning in the Playoffs, but Can They Win

By Matthew Vandenburgh
Sports Editor

The 2015-2016 National Hockey League regular season is finished, and now it is down to 16 teams to see who will claim Lord Stanley's Cup. The Tampa Bay Lightning are one of those 16, and will seek to improve upon last season's excellent playoff run by finishing the job and winning the championship. They are set to face off against the Detroit Red Wings, a rematch of last year's playoff quarterfinals which were won by the Lightning in seven games.

It will be a harder road this year, as injuries to major stars will be a burden on a roster that has been inconsistent this season. The Lightning finished with 97 points, good enough for second place in the Atlantic Division. However, due to the injuries to forward Steven Stamkos and defenseman Anton Stralman, it will not be extra challenging for the team.

Stamkos, the Lightning's captain and offensive leader, had surgery on Apr. 4 to remove a blood clot from his shoulder. This will keep him out for anywhere between one to three months, which will force the Lightning to rely on players like Jonathan Drouin, Alex Killorn, Nikita Kucherov and Ondrej Palat to excel during his absence. If this were the regular season, it would be easier for the team to try to just stay afloat, maintaining their position as best they could until Stamkos returns, but the playoffs are a different beast entirely. Best of seven series do not agree with long term injuries, and the fact that the Lightning's best offensive player will, at best, miss most of the playoffs means that a win now mentality is needed from the start.

The Stamkos injury will be especially hard on the Lightning considering how average they were on offense this year. Scoring 2.7 goals per game placed the team 12th in the league, but an anemic 15.8 percent on the power play was towards the bottom of the NHL, 28th of the 30 teams. Without Stamkos, this offense will likely struggle further.

Despite how important Stamkos is to the offense, the bigger injury is likely to be to Stralman. He will miss the opening round after breaking his leg on Mar. 25, leaving a hole in the defense that will be hard to fill. The Lightning defense was exceptional this season, posting 2.4 goals against average, 5th in the league, and holding the 7th best penalty kill percentage, at 84 percent. Stralman's absence will hurt that defense in the playoffs though.

Where the Lightning don't have to worry is in the net. Goalie Ben Bishop maintained his excellent play throughout the season, finishing with the league's best 2.06 goals against average, the second best save percentage, at .926, and tied for fourth in the league with 35 wins. He likely will be a finalist for the Vezina trophy, awarded to the best goalie in the league. Bishop will keep the Lightning in every game they play, as long as the injury bug that the Lightning are dealing with right now doesn't bite him.

Initially, the Lightning will have to deal with a hungry Detroit Red Wings team, who are looking to rally behind retiring star Pavel Datsyuk and avenge last playoff's defeat. The Lightning are deep enough that they should be able to get past Detroit, but then they will draw either the Atlantic Division champion Florida Panthers or the wild card New York Islanders. Neither team would be much of a problem with the Lightning at full health, but since they won't be, it will be a tough matchup either way.

The first game of the playoffs will have been played on Apr. 13, and this game will go a long way in seeing if the Lightning's injuries will be too much to overcome. It is unlikely that they will be defeated by Detroit, but the Lightning will probably need all seven games to advance. The Lightning defeat either Florida or New York in the next round, but it does not look like they will go all the way this season. Fans can expect a gritty performance by a wounded team, but the team should survive until the Conference Finals.

NHL Playoff First Round Predictions

By Matthew Vandenburgh
Sports Editor

The Stanley Cup Playoffs are here, and every team has a chance. However, there are some teams that are better than the others, and other teams that do not have the injury problems that their competitors have. Here are some predictions about the 2016 Stanley Cup Playoffs.

The Metropolitan Division is where the Washington Capitals reside. The Capitals won the President's trophy, meaning they had the best record in the NHL. They face the Philadelphia Flyers in the first round, and despite how tough the Flyers are, the Capitals should have no problem against them, likely dispatching the Flyers in five games. The Capitals will then face off against the winner of the Pittsburgh Penguins and the New York Rangers. The Rangers have world class goalie Henrik Lundqvist playing for them, while the Penguins have the world class forward Sidney Crosby playing for them. The difference in this series will be health, as the Penguins will likely be without their top goalie, Marc-Andre Fleury. Despite that, the Penguins have been the hottest team in the NHL, and they should advance past the Rangers in a tight series.

The Atlantic Division starts off with the Florida Panthers against the New York Islanders. The Panthers won the division, and should hold off a scrappy Islanders team that will be without their starting goalie. This series should go the full seven games, leaving the Panthers tired against the winner of the Tampa Bay Lightning- Detroit Red Wings series. The Lightning are hurt, missing their top forward and a key defenseman. However, the Lightning are too talented to lose to the Red Wings, who just barely made it into the playoffs. It will be close, but the Lightning should win this in seven games.

The Central Division sees the Dallas Stars with the Western Conference's best record, facing the Minnesota Wild. The Stars should advance easily, especially if they can take advantage of the Wild's poor penalty kill. The Stars would then draw the winner of the St. Louis Blues versus the Chicago Blackhawks. The Blackhawks are the defending champions, but they have not been as good this year. The Blues come into the series with one of the top goalies in the league, as Brian Elliot lead the NHL in save percentage this season. Given that and a tough defense, the Blues should send the Blackhawks home after a tough six game series.

The Pacific Division sees the Anaheim Ducks taking on the Nashville Predators. Even though the Ducks won their division, the Predators won two of the three games the teams played against each other. The Predators were very good, but the Ducks have been better lately, and this will be a very tough series for either team to win, but the Ducks should emerge victorious after a seven game set. The Ducks will then face the winner of the Los Angeles Kings- San Jose Sharks series. Familiarity breeds contempt, and the Kings and the Sharks do not like each other. This will add to the drama of a tough series where both teams would be favored against almost any other team in the playoffs. Look for the Sharks to avoid another playoff elimination by the Kings, winning in six games.

Upcoming Games 4/16/16 - 4/22/16

W Lacrosse

4/16: Vs Tampa 1:00 pm

4/19: @ Fla. Southern 7:00 pm

W Tennis

4/16: @ Florida Tech 2:00 pm

4/17: @ #7 Nova Southeastern 10:00 am

Baseball

4/16: Vs Barry 1:00 pm

4/16: Vs Barry 4:00 pm

4/22: @ Florida Tech 6:00 pm

Softball

4/18: Vs Fla. Southern 6:00 pm

4/19: Vs Fla. Southern 1:00 pm

4/20: Vs Fla. Southern 3:00 pm

M Track

4/16: Sunshine State Conference Invite
@ Daytona Beach, Fla. 10:00 am

4/22: UF Tom Jones Classic 3:00 pm

W Track

4/16: Sunshine State Conference Invite
@ Daytona Beach, Fla. 10:00 am

4/22: UF Tom Jones Classic TBA

M Golf

4/17: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.

4/18: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.

4/19: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.

W Golf

4/17: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.

4/18: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.

4/19: Sunshine State Conf. Championship
@ Key Biscayne, Fla.